Dr. Pamina Firchow  
Assistant Professor  
School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution  
George Mason University  
pfirchow@gmu.edu

Belquis Ahmadi  
Senior Program Officer  
United States Institute of Peace  
bahmadi@usip.org

Zach Tilton  
Doctoral Research Associate  
Interdisciplinary PhD in Evaluation Western Michigan University  
zachary.d.tilton@wmich.edu
Difficult to Define Concepts
Reconciliation Governance
Peace
Justice Violent Extremism
How are we usually guided?

- Gather Panel of Experts
  - Project/program managers
  - Scholars
  - Technical experts
  - High level officials
- Define a concept
- Generalize a concept to gain maximum impact
- Identify Indicators
- Collect Data
Why can this be problematic?

Outsiders define what a particular concept means to a specific group with a unique lived experience.

Concepts can be very context and culture specific.

Indicators are often in a vernacular that is foreign to the context they should be measuring or measure priorities of donors or implementers.

Communities are best placed to identify their own indicators of difficult to measure concepts in order to ensure measurement validity.
The process involves four key steps:

1. Develop
2. Verify
3. Design
4. Survey
We start by asking community members to identify their own measures of peace.

What signs do you look for in your daily life to determine whether you and your community are at peace?

Children at play
Less barking dogs at night
Antennas on roofs
Feel safe at night

Signs of peace
What are the villagers’ indicators of violent extremism?

- Inaccessibility of mullahs to attend ANA funerals
- Dogs barking at nights
- Domestic abuse
- Vaccination campaigns depart
- The police are carrying weapons
- Not seeing (NGO) branded projects
- Strangers/people masking their faces present in the village
Women’s indicators of peace & security

• Mobility
• Access to education
• Girls are allowed to play volleyball
• Music played in wedding ceremonies
• Seeing boys play sports
Men’s indicators of peace & security

- Visibility of symbols (TV antenna)
- Seeing girls going to school
- Seeing female NGO workers in village
- Seeing women on TV
1. **DEVELOP**

**STEP ONE**

Researchers and local partners conduct focus group sessions and gather indicators from communities that are already being used by communities to measure their own peacefulness.

*Focus group #1*

*Focus group #2*
2. **VERIFY**

**STEP TWO**

Participants go through and refine the list of indicators & have the **ENTIRE COMMUNITY VOTE** to identify the **MOST REPRESENTATIVE INDICATORS** for the community.
Teams use everyday indicators to design projects that meet the needs of the community.
EPI is helpful in the design and planning of programs. By analyzing the everyday indicators, you can learn a lot about what kinds of projects communities need.
Fieldworkers survey the community with a refined list of indicators; surveys are repeated several times to measure change.
Evolution of Everyday Evaluation
The EPI methodology captures local voices while meeting the demands of rigor expected by donors and the peacebuilding community.

EPI ensures:
1. Internal validity
2. Precision
3. Reliability
4. External validity

But what about rigor? Community voices.

Donors and peacebuilders and many other things.
Reclaiming Everyday Peace: Local Voices in Measurement and Evaluation After War

Cambridge University Press, 2018
Perceptual and Inferential Evaluation

What ways can everyday perceptual evaluation enhance your approach to inferential evaluation?
Dr. Pamina Firchow
Assistant Professor
School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution
George Mason University
pfirchow@gmu.edu

Belquis Ahmadi
Senior Program Officer
United States Institute of Peace
bahmadi@usip.org

Zach Tilton
Doctoral Research Associate
Interdisciplinary PhD in Evaluation Western Michigan University
zachary.d.tilton@wmich.edu

More information at everydaypeaceindicators.org